



## **Denali Commission Update November 2004**

### **Regulatory Commission of Alaska Seeks Comment**

The Regulatory Commission of Alaska (RCA) has taken a significant step to enhance sustainability of rural utilities by addressing a petition initiated by the Denali Commission to allow amortization of grant funded capital assets. Docket # R-04-004 is open for public comment until December 3, 2004. For more information or to comment please see [www.state.ak.us/rca](http://www.state.ak.us/rca) or call (907) 276-6222 or 1-800-390-2782.

### **Health Facilities Program Primary Care Applications**

At the October 22, 2004 Health Steering Committee meeting, Chair Mansager recognized Mr. Joel Neimeyer's excellence as Program Manager to the Commission's Health Facilities Program since its inception. Denali Commission Chief of Staff, Al Ewing presented Mr. Neimeyer with a certificate signed by the Federal and State Co-chairs, Jeff Staser and Loren Leman recognizing his extraordinary dedication to building the team and charting the course for dramatically improved health care in Alaska.

Mr. Neimeyer will officially leave the Commission and return to the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC) after January 31, 2004. Ms. Tessa Rinner, Joel's deputy for the past year, will fill his position, and Ms. Denali Daniels will expand her role to also include primary care.

The Commission has, for the first time with the Primary Care Program, reached the point where there are more sustainable projects than available FY04 funds. As a result, applicants who anticipate project development and funding in FY05 should aggressively submit application materials and complete necessary conceptual planning components. Interested applicants should apply for funding using our Primary Care RFP. In general, for projects greater than \$100,000 a Site Plan Checklist and a Business Plan must be approved prior to commitment of Commission funding.

<b><i>Health Program Contact Information: Organization</i></b>	<b><i>Contact</i></b>
<b><i>Denali Commission</i></b>	<i>Joel Neimeyer (907) 271-1414 main Tessa Rinner Denali Daniels</i>
<b><i>Alaska Primary Care Association</i></b>	<i>Marilyn Kasmar (907) 929-2722</i>

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<i><b>Alaska Native Health Board</b></i>	<i>Trudy Anderson (907) 562-6006</i>
<i><b>Department of Health and Social Services, Office of the Commissioner</b></i>	<i>Dr. Richard Mansager (Chair, Health Steering Committee)) Patricia Carr (907)465-8618</i>
<i><b>Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium</b></i>	<i>Don Kashevaroff (907) 729-1915</i>
<i><b>Alaska State Hospital and Nursing Home Association</b></i>	<i>Rod Betit (907) 586-1790</i>
<i><b>Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Behavioral Health</b></i>	<i>Bill Hogan (907)465-3370</i>
<i><b>Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority (AMHTA)</b></i>	<i>Jeff Jessee (907) 269-7963</i>

## Energy Program

Progress continues on energy projects in more than 50 communities around Alaska. Most of these projects involve either design and construction of new bulk fuel tank farms or upgrades to community power generation or distribution systems, but the Commission is also supporting a few energy cost reduction projects. For the FFY 04, allocations for bulk fuel projects totaled \$19.4 million, and \$20.7 million were allocated for rural power system upgrades. An additional \$8.9 million were allocated for other projects designated by the appropriation. Of course, infrastructure improvement efforts such as these could never succeed without careful planning and collaboration among the many program partners. This month, we highlight a few communities which exemplify this spirit of cooperation.

In **Nelson Lagoon**, construction is nearly complete on a tank farm project that began with conceptual planning over three years ago. Bryan Carey, the Alaska Energy Authority's Project Manager who has been working with the community on this project, says, "This was a great community effort! Our local workers were a dedicated team, committed to the job all summer. And the Native Village was very involved with helping to address the land issues that took time to work through."

Another element that was unique to this project was the concern for Stellar's Eiders. More than 90% of the world's population of this highly endangered duck spends the winter on the ocean near Nelson Lagoon. "As the planning for this tank farm project progressed," Bryan explains, "the lights were designed to be more shielded so they would be less likely to impact the eiders. Special attention was focused on designing a very comprehensive fuel spill cleanup plan, too."

Bryan is also the project manger for a new tank farm in **Akutan**, which is nearly complete. This Aleutian community is squeezed between the mountains and the sea, and residents move about the village on narrow boardwalks. There was no room to site a new tank farm, so construction had to take place on the existing fuel location. The old tanks needed to be removed at the same time as the new ones were going in—without interrupting the fuel supply. "The geographic challenges in Akutan were compounded by particularly severe weather this fall," Bryan says. "This project could never have succeeded without the consistent support of the mayor, Joe Bereskin, who really makes things happen there. We were also grateful for the cooperation of Trident Seafoods, who helped us out with heavy equipment and with delivering the new tanks to the project site."

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Another AEA project manager, Fintan Lyons, has been working with **Port Heiden** and **Chefornak** to design power system upgrades in these communities. “Scott Anderson, the mayor of Port Heiden, and Robert Panouk, manager of Chefornak’s village corporation, have both helped organize excellent public meetings with a lot of participation in these two communities. This input and participation is enormously helpful in moving these projects forward and making sure that the final design is just what each community needs,” Fintan says.

<i><b>Energy Program Contact Information: Organization</b></i>	<b>Contact</b>
<i><b>Denali Commission</b></i>	<i>Kathy Prentki, (907) 271-1414 Rayna Swanson (907) 271-4990</i>
<i><b>AIDEA/AEA</b></i>	<i>Mike Harper, (907) 269-3000</i>
<i><b>AVEC</b></i>	<i>Meera Kohler, (907) 561-1818</i>
<i><b>Energy Policy Advisory Committee</b></i>	<i>Eric Yould, (907) 563-2550</i>

## **Training**

The Denali Commission’s FY 04 Training Program approved by the Denali Commission in April 2004 received its congressional appropriation from the U.S. Department of Labor for \$4.9MM in July 2004. The State of Alaska Department of Labor (AK DOL) is managing the projects and programs approved by the Commission in April 2004.

The Denali Training Fund was established by the Denali Commission to ensure that rural residents have the skills necessary to become employed on the construction, operation, and maintenance of Denali Commission and other State and Federal funded public infrastructure projects. The Commission places priority on funding for training related to Denali Commission infrastructure projects, therefore, the Denali Training Fund will only be accepting applications from Denali Commission related training projects until March 2005 to ensure that available funds meet the demand for training on Commission projects. In March 2005 the Commission will assess whether funds are available to accept applications for training on projects not related to Denali Commission infrastructure.

Applications are received on an on-going basis with quarterly deadlines for review. The next deadline for applications is **December 15, 2004**.

For more information or to apply: *Download an application from [www.denali.gov](http://www.denali.gov) under Training Program or contact:* Gerry McDonagh, Grants Administrator  
State of Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Division of Business Partnerships  
(907) 269-4551, [gerry\\_mcdonagh@labor.state.ak.us](mailto:gerry_mcdonagh@labor.state.ak.us)  
Any questions about the Denali Commission’s FY 04 Training Program please contact:  
Krag Johnsen, Deputy Chief of Staff, Denali Commission  
(907) 271-1413, [kjohnsen@denali.gov](mailto:kjohnsen@denali.gov)

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### **Multi-Use Facility Program**

Funding for the Multi Use Program in FFY 05 is unknown at this time. If the Commission receives communication from Congress that the Multi Use Program will be funded in FFY 05 the process to select projects will begin. Eligibility and general program requirements can be found in FFY 04's RFP at <http://www.denali.gov/Section.cfm?Section=Multiuse%20Facilities> . NOTE: some eligibility and program requirements may change in FFY 05. Link to FFY 04 material is for reference only. Please contact Rachael Petro, Multi Use Facilities Program Manager, at [rpetro@denali.gov](mailto:rpetro@denali.gov) or 907-271-1414 with questions.

### **Economic Development**

#### **Mini-Grant Program**

The Alaska Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development awarded \$534,036 to 21 Mini-Grant Program applicants in mid-September. The Denali Commission and the USDA Forest Service committed \$250,000 and \$340,000 respectively to the program. Forty applicants applied to the program this year, and 36 applications passed the threshold review process. These 36 applications requested a total of approximately \$964,000. Twenty one of these were offered a total of \$534,036.

See [http://www.dced.state.ak.us/dca/grt/pub/FFY\\_05\\_MINI\\_Awards.pdf](http://www.dced.state.ak.us/dca/grt/pub/FFY_05_MINI_Awards.pdf) for list of recommended awards.

**Background:** The Mini-Grant Program is co-funded by the Denali Commission and the USDA Forest Service, and managed by the Alaska Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development. For program information, see the following:  
<http://www.dced.state.ak.us/cbd/grt/minigrant.htm>.

**Program contact:** Jo E. Grove, (907) 451-2716, [jo\\_grove@dced.state.ak.us](mailto:jo_grove@dced.state.ak.us)

#### **Alaska Growth Capital Program**

The Denali Commission allocated \$500,000 to the Alaska Growth Capital (AGC) Program at its April 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting. AGC loan officers are currently working on a variety of financings throughout the state. AGC staff held a technical assistance session in conjunction with the Alaska Federation of Natives conference in October. The workshop was called Redefining Leadership: A New Age in Economic Development, An Interactive Workshop for Alaskans Interested in Leadership, Change and Growth.

**Background:** Through capitalization by the Denali Commission, US Treasury, Arctic Slope Regional Corporation and others, Alaska Growth Capital has provided financing and just-in-time business assistance to entrepreneurs throughout Alaska. The Commission requires that AGC focus on economically distressed rural communities. For more information, see:  
<http://www.alaskagrowth.com/main.html>.

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**Program Contact:** David Hoffman, (907) 339-6760; [dhoffman@alaskagrowth.com](mailto:dhoffman@alaskagrowth.com)

### **Initiative for Accelerated Infrastructure Development**

There are currently six IAID projects funded with IAID grant funds. The six projects will result in the preparation of community maps for 73 communities. Total grant and local contribution funding provided to produce the maps for the 73 communities is \$2,076,150. The following summarizes the status of the six projects.

- Aleutians East Borough – This project is complete and produced community maps for 6 communities.
- Lake and Peninsula Borough - This project covers 17 communities. Ten of the seventeen communities are complete and the remaining 7 are approaching completion.
- Bristol Bay – This project covers 10 communities. One community is ready for final maps, second drafts have been prepared for 5 communities, and first drafts have been completed for 4 communities.
- Bering Strait – This project covers 15 communities. Aerial photographs have been obtained for 13 of the communities. Weather prevented the contractor from obtaining photos of Gambell and Savoonga. Photos will be obtained in the spring. Ground control fieldwork is also complete for the 13 communities.
- Southeast – This project covers 11 communities. Both the ground control field work and the aerial photo phases of this project have been completed.
- Lower Kuskokwim River – This project covers 14 communities. Forest fire smoke and weather prevented the contractor from obtaining aerial photos of all the communities. Additional photos will be taken next spring. Ground control fieldwork is proceeding.